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# **SALUDA NURSING CENTER**

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October 8, 2008

South Carolina Public Service Commission  
101 Executive Center Drive, Suite 100  
Post Office Box 11649  
Columbia SC 29211-1649

**RE: ADDITIONAL PROPOSED "STRETCHER VAN"**  
**REGULATIONS TO COMPORT WITH CHANGES IN THE**  
**TRANSPORTATION INDUSTRY**

**DOCKET NO. 2007-445-A**

To Whom It May Concern:

As a Family Medical Practitioner in Saluda County who owns, manages, and operates a Rural Health Clinic, I have been practicing medicine for more than 25 years. While waiting to enter medical school, I took the Emergency Medical Technician course as a way to learn more information about medicine.

Saluda County's Ambulance Service at that time was just getting started. Saluda County is very rural; has no hospital; and other than the doctors' offices in the county and the 176-bed skilled nursing facility, there are no places for medical care.

For many years, I served as Medical Control Physician for Saluda County Ambulance Service. In addition, I have also served as Medical Director for Saluda Nursing Center and continue to do so on a rotating basis with another Saluda physician. If a person needs to be transported on a stretcher to any kind of medical facility whether it is a hospital for an x-ray, an MD's office for an appointment to be examined, or another nursing home, they are sick enough to be attended and accompanied by at least a basic EMT. Anyone sick enough to require stretcher transportation needs medical accompaniment.

Emergency medical care has progressed a long way in SC. Now, only a few years into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, is not the time to decide to regress to pre-20<sup>th</sup> century times. I say this because it has been brought to my attention that the Public Service Commission is considering allowing stretcher vans with non-EMT's to transport patients to their needed medical appointments. This consideration is preposterous.

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Letter to Public Service Commission

RE: No Need for "Stretcher Vans"

Regulations already exist under the EMS Department of the SC DHEC which address non-emergent transport situations. There is no need to provide more regulations and another layer of bureaucracy.

It is already difficult enough now for me to get those residents at Saluda Nursing Center transported to my office with the current regulations. I do not want to have to deal with another unnecessary layer of red tape to be able to see my patients who need to come to my office but cannot ride in a regular automobile.

Please do not agree to any new red tape when there are already regulations to cover this situation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ralph N. Riley MD", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ralph N. Riley, MD  
Riley Family Practice